

## **JOINT PROTOCOL FOR INVESTIGATIONS IN RESOURCE HOMES**

### **Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit & Child Protection and Permanency**

This protocol pertains to those cases involving the alleged abuse or neglect of minors where both the Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit (IAIU) and the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) have concurrent investigations. The IAIU investigates allegations of abuse or neglect for children in out-of-home settings and CP&P investigates, but is not limited to, the investigations of allegations of abuse or neglect of biological and adopted children in an in-home setting.

The intent of the protocol is to ensure that communication is established during the investigation process and that factual information is consistent and shared between the respective parties. For this reason, establishing communication and collaboration between IAIU and CP&P from the outset of the investigation is critical. It is also understood that each unit is working under its respective division mandate to complete investigations within sixty days. However, there are exceptions to an investigation surpassing the 60 day time frame; such as law enforcement involvement or awaiting medical documentation. If the time frame is to be extended the unit doing so should advise the other so that one is not closed prematurely.

### **PROTOCOL**

- At the time the IAIU Regional Office is assigned a case for investigation, the IAIU Investigator will reach out to the assigned CP&P Ongoing or Intake Worker to coordinate an investigation.
- IAIU/DCP&P will attempt to conduct collaborative interviews. Efforts for collaboration shall not impede IAIU or CP&P from initiating the investigation within its mandated response time.
- In the event that a CP&P Worker is unable to accompany the IAIU Investigator at the onset of the investigation, the IAIU Investigator will apprise the CP&P Worker and Supervisor/Covering Supervisor of any information obtained by the close of the business day if applicable, if not, at the Investigator's next available opportunity the following day.
- The IAIU Investigator will document in the 8-Day Initial Response Report (22-6) that there is an ongoing joint investigation with CP&P and note any concerns found thus far.
- During the course of the on-going investigation, the IAIU Investigator/CP&P worker shall maintain communication/correspondence and confer regarding any additional information obtained.

- At a point no later than 30 days from the onset of the investigation, and prior to the conclusion of the investigation, the IAIU Supervisor will conference the direction of the findings with the assigned DCP&P Case Work Supervisor.
- In the event that there is a conflict in the finding, the Supervisor of Investigations assigned to the regional office will discuss the conflict with the assigned Local Office Manager. If needed, the DAG from both the assigned IAIU office and the LO, may be included in this conference and or the conflict resolution procedure in the policy manual can be utilized.
- IAIU and DCP&P will close their respective cases and notify their respective counterpart that the investigation is complete. This notification will take place after the final supervisory conference preferably prior to entering the final investigative results in NJSPIRIT.

Some examples of circumstances that might generate concurrent IAIU/CP&P investigations:

A resource provider is alleged to have utilized corporal punishment with the child (ren) in placement as well as the biological child (ren) or an IAIU investigation involving a child (ren) who was allegedly injured at a day care results in a CPS Family spin off case when medical information later suggests that the injury is attributed to the biological parents.

When there is an overlap of investigative jurisdictions, investigation findings may differ between a child under investigation by IAIU and a child under investigation by CP&P. For example, a resource provider is physically abusive toward a child in placement; however, does not physically abuse their biological children or vice versa. A further example would be, a resource provider that allows the child in placement to have unapproved unsupervised contact with their biological parent, while this is not an issue with the provider's biological children. Therefore, there have been instances in which IAIU and CP&P have investigated the same incident, collecting and analyzing the same set of facts, but have arrived at different findings.